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A

MOTHER'S ADVICE

TO HER

SON AND DAUGHTER.

BY THE

MARCHIONESS DE LAMBERT.

FIRST AMERICAN EDITION.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY MELVIN LORD.
1814.

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B

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PREFACE.

THE excellence of the Marchioness de Lambert's Advice to her Son and Daughter, has been generally acknowledged. The enlarged and generous views of life with which she has presented her pupils cannot fail of awakening in the youthful mind the most noble sentiments, and stimulating it to the grandest pursuits of virtue. She warns the traveller of the advantages of early industry, of perseverance, of activity, of fortitude; she encourages him to go on, undismayed by difficulty—undepressed by disappointment—to fear nothing but the allurements of vice—to be bold enough on all occasions to do what is right to do—and to meet the con-

sequences of virtuous conduct, be they good or ill, with the serenity which is to be expected from an exalted mind.

Compositions which have really been addressed to individuals, and dictated by the solicitude of affection, are always read with peculiar interest and advantage. To the animation of private intercourse is added, in the present performance, the dignity of the most elaborate writing, and all that fervency of expression, which irresistibly and lastingly impresses the mind of the reader.

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ADVICE

OF A

MOTHER TO HER SON.

1. THE education of children, with whatever care it may be performed, is always extremely imperfect: to obtain the desired end, the tutors ought to be persons of unusual merit; but where shall we find such? Princes themselves have endeavoured in vain to procure and retain these characters. Where shall we find men so much superior to others as to be deservedly placed over their conduct? Yet, our earliest years are precious, because on these depend the virtues of the rest.

There are but two periods of life in which truth is visible to us to any purpose: in youth for our instruction—in old age for our consolation. During the reign of the passions truth abandons us.

Two celebrated men,* on account of their friendship for your family, have had the care of your education; but, obliged to follow the method of instruction established in the schools, they have been more solicitous in your early years to make you acquainted with science, than to teach you the knowledge of the world, and the decorums of life.

Here, my son, are some precepts regarding good manners: read them at your leisure. They are not dry lessons, marked with the authority of a mother—they are rather the advice of a friend, coming from the heart.

2. On entering the world you have, surely, proposed to yourself some object of pursuit—you have too much understanding to have been willing to live indolently—you cannot aspire to any object more worthy, nor more advantageous, than virtue.

3. As I wish for nothing so much as to see you a perfectly honest man, let us consider what are the duties of this character, to the end that we may perceive by what line of conduct it may be deserved. I shall instruct myself by these reflections: I shall be happy enough, one day, to change my precepts into examples.

* P. Bouhours, and P. Chemin.

She who exhorts should lead the way. An ambassador from Persia asked the wife of Leonidas, why women were so much honoured at Lacedemon? "Because women," replied she, "can form the manners of men." A Grecian lady showed the mother of Phocion her jewels, and requested to see hers: "Here are my ornaments and my jewels," said the latter, pointing to her children! I have strong hopes, my son, that *you* will one day be all my glory: but let us return to the duties of man.

4. The order of those duties is: the knowledge how to live with his superiors—his equals—his inferiors—and with himself. With his superiors, to please without servility; with his equals, to evince esteem and friendship; with his inferiors, to save them from feeling the weight of his superiority; with himself, to preserve dignity and self respect.

5. Above all those duties is the worship which you owe to the Supreme Being. Religion is an unrestrained intercourse between God and man; by the grace of God to man, and the worship of man to God. Exalted souls entertain sentiments, and practice a worship, of God, which have no resemblance to those of common

minds; which belong to the heart, and go immediately to God. The moral virtues are in great danger, unless associated with the christian. I do not require of you that sort of piety which is full of weakness and superstition: I ask, only, that the love of God should lead you to submit your understanding and sentiments to Him; that the same love should prevail in all your affections: this will inspire you with justice, and justice is the basis of all virtues.

The generality of young men, think, in our days, to distinguish themselves by an air of libertinism; this is an affectation which degrades them in the opinion of sensible persons: it proves, not the superiority of the mind, but the depravity of the heart. Religion is never attacked but by those who have an interest in attacking it: nothing contributes so much to happiness as a mind convinced, and a heart sensible of, the truth of religion: this is an advantage in every season. Those, even, who are not happy enough to believe in it as they ought, still respect those who do: they know that religion holds the highest rank in the esti-

mation of the world, and that it ought to be respected.

Libertinism of mind, and licentiousness of manners, ought to be banished from society. We are happy in living in an age, in which purity of manners, and respect for religion, are necessary to those who would wish to be respected.

6. I might, my son, in the order of duties, place myself: but I wish to rely wholly on your heart. Consider the condition in which your father left me. I had sacrificed all my own fortune to his: at his death I lost all.—I saw myself alone and without support—I had no friends but his—and I have found that few people are friends of the dead.—I found my enemies in my own family—I had to sustain, against powerful persons, a law-suit which was to decide my fortune: I had nothing on my side but justice and fortitude: I have gained my cause without influence, and without humiliation. In short, I made the best of my bad fortune: as soon as this improved, I turned all my thoughts to yours. Give me, in your friendship, the same share which I shall give you in my little fortune.

I would have no forced respect—I would have only sincere regards—I would have your sentiments unbiassed by interest. In short, be careful of your virtue, and I will be careful of the rest.

There are various kinds of dignities, and these require as many sorts of deference.

There are real and personal dignities, and dignities of social institution. Respect is due to persons of elevated rank; but this is only external respect: we owe esteem and sentimental respect to merit. When the union of fortune and virtue has raised a man to grandeur, that character possesses a double empire, and has a claim to double submission: you must not be dazzled nor deceived by the glitter of a title.

There are mean souls which are always prostrate before rank. We should separate the man from his dignity, and consider what he is when thus stripped: there is a greatness which differs exceedingly from that which results from authority: it is neither power, nor wealth, which distinguish men: the superiority which is real and true, is merit.

7. The title of an honest man is far above

the titles of fortune. In subaltern situations, a man is not independent: he must pay his court to ministers: but he should do this with dignity. I shall never give you lessons of servility: your services, and not unbecoming submissions, should plead for your advancement.

Men of merit in attaching themselves to ministers confer honour: slaves, disgrace. Nothing is more agreeable than to be the friend of persons of high rank: but this cannot happen but through the desire of pleasing. Seek to connect yourself with persons of superior rank: by this means you will gain habits of respect and of politeness. With equals men become negligent of themselves: their minds grow indolent.

8. I know not whether you may hope to find friends at court. As for persons of authority, their situation dispenses with many duties, and covers many faults. It is useful to look closely into men, to see them undisguised and arrayed only in their every-day merit. At a distance, the favourites of fortune impose upon you: distance places them in an advantageous point of view—fame exaggerates their merit, and flattery deifies them: approach, and you find

them only men. How many of the vulgar may be found at court! To lower grandeur in your idea, you must examine it closely: you will then cease to regard it as an object either of desire or of fear.

9. Let not the faults of the great corrupt you. but, rather, teach you to correct your own. From the ill use which they make of their wealth you may learn to despise riches, and to prescribe rules to yourself. Virtue does not preside over their expenses.

10. Why, in the infinite number of luxuries invented by pleasure and effeminacy, has no idea started for the relief of the miserable? Does not humanity make you feel the necessity of succouring your fellow-creatures? Virtuous hearts are more sensible of the obligations they are under of doing good, than of all the other desires of life. Marcus Aurelius thanked the gods that he had always served his friends without making them wait. The bliss of greatness exists only when others find their good fortune in ours. "I cannot feel a happiness," said that prince, "which is to be enjoyed only by "myself."

11. The most exquisite pleasure is that of

pleasing others: but, to enjoy this, we must not depend too much upon the gifts of fortune. Wealth has never given virtue, but virtue has often given wealth. Observe, too, what use the generality of the great make of their fortune! They place every thing in exterior appearances and parade: their dignity weighs down themselves, and depresses others: mean while, true greatness is humane: it permits approach, it even descends to you: those who possess it are at their ease, and make others so likewise. Their elevation does not cost them a single virtue: and their noble spirits have, as it were, accustomed them to it before-hand. They are not strangers to their dignity, and no one suffers by their advancement.

12. Titles and honours are not the bonds which unite us to men, nor which attract them to us: if we do not add merit and goodness, they easily escape: they will seek only to indemnify themselves for an homage which they are forced to pay to the situation rather than to the man, whom, in his absence, they will freely judge and condemn. If, however, through envy, we seek to lessen the good qualities of the great, we should resist this inclination, and do

justice to their merit. We frequently fancy that our murmurs are only levelled at the men, while, in truth, they are aimed at their places. Those who occupy a post are never, in the world's eye, the fit persons: justice is never done them till they have relinquished the situation. Envy, in spite of herself, pays homage to grandeur, though she pretends to despise it; for she honours the places which she envies. Let us not, out of discontent, condemn agreeable situations which have no fault: but that we want them. Let us pass to the duties of society.

13. Mankind has formed that for the common good, it is necessary and agreeable to unite—it has made laws to repress the wicked—it has agreed upon certain duties of society, and attached glory to the discharge of these duties. The most virtuous man is he that observes them most faithfully; so that these duties multiply in the degree that honour increases.

Virtues link themselves together, and form a sort of alliance between each other; and it is the union of all these virtues which form an extraordinary man. After having prescribed the duties necessary to the common safety, men

have sought to render their intercourse agreeable: they have established the rules of politeness and knowledge of the world.

14. There are no precepts to be given to well-bred persons against certain faults; there are vices which are unknown to honest minds. Probity, fidelity to promises, love of truth, are qualities concerning which, I think, I have nothing to admonish you. You know that an honest man is unacquainted with a lie. What praises are not given to those who love truth! Such, it is said, resemble the Supreme Being, who does good, and who speaks truth. If it be not always right to speak what we think, it is, however, to think of what we speak. The true use of speech is to serve the cause of truth. When a man has acquired the reputation of veracity, he will be sworn upon his word: it has all the authority of an oath: it is received with religious respect.

Falsehood in deed is not less opposite to the love of truth than falsehood in word. Honest men are never false; what have they to conceal? Neither are they eager to shew themselves; they are sure that sooner or later true merit will be conspicuous.

15. In subaltern employments, you can recommend yourself only by desiring to please; as soon as you neglect this, you are little valued. Nothing displeases more than betraying predominant self-love: of self-love to the degree that is seen you prefer self in, and make it the centre in every thing.

You may make yourself very disagreeable with a great deal of wit, when you apply it only to the discovery and exposure of the faults of others. Those sort of people whose exhibitions of wit are always at the expense of others, should frequently reflect that there is no life sufficiently pure to confer the right of censuring that of others.

16 Raillery, which is one of the amusements of conversation, is of difficult management.—Persons who wish to traduce, and love to rally, have a secret malignity in their hearts. From the most gentle raillery to affront there is but one step to be made: a false friend frequently abuses the liberty of pleasantry for the purpose of wounding you; but the person whom you attack has the sole right of judging whether you are really in jest; as soon as you wound, it is no longer raillery but affront.

The object of raillery ought to fall under the censure of faults so trifling, that he himself may be merry on the subject. Delicate raillery is a mixture of praise and blame; it touches lightly upon little faults, only to dwell upon great qualities. M. de la Rouchefoucault says: "dishonour offends less than ridicule." I think with him for this reason: it is not in the power of any person really to dishonour another; it is by our own conduct, and not by the assistance of another that we can become dishonourable; the causes of dishonour are known and certain; ridicule is wholly arbitrary; it depends upon the manner in which objects present themselves; and upon the manner of thinking and feeling. There are persons who are always spectacles of ridicule; the fault lies not in the object, but in the observer; this is so true, that persons who are devoted to ridicule in certain circles, are admired in others, in which men of understanding and merit are to be found.

17. It is by peculiar humours that men please and displease; gloomy and sour humours, which lean to misanthropy, very much displease.

Humour is the disposition with which the soul receives the impression of objects; amiable

humours or tempers take nothing in ill part; their indulgence serves themselves, and lends to others that in which they are deficient.

Most men imagine that there is no correcting ill humours; they say, "I was born thus:" and think that this excuse emancipates them from the duty of controlling themselves. Such humours owe you nothing but to the degree that you please them. The rules for pleasing are: forget *self;* lead others to what interests them—make them contented with themselves—allow them their value; and the possession of those qualities which they wish to be their own.—They believe that you give them what the world denies; this is, in some sort, to create that merit which elevates them in the opinion of others; but this complaisance must never be pushed to the degree of adulation.

18. Nothing is so pleasing as when persons of sensibility seek to connect themselves with others.

Behave so that your manners may, at once, offer and unite friendship. You cannot be an amiable man if you know not what it is to be a friend, if you have no taste for friendship. It is friendship which corrects the vices of so-

ciety; it softens rugged tempers; it humbles the haughty, and puts them in their places. All the duties of virtue are inclosed within the demands of perfect friendship.

Amid the tumult of the world, my son, possess some firm friend, who may supply your soul with the words of truth; be ready to receive the advice of friends. The avowal of faults seldom costs much to those who feel within themselves the power of reformation: never think then that you have done enough, while you feel that you can still do better. None take reproof more gently than those who deserve to be praised. If you are so happy as to have found a virtuous and faithful friend, you have found a treasure: his reputation guarantees yours: he will be responsible to you for yourself: he will soften your troubles, and multiply your pleasures: but, to merit a friend, you must be capable of being one yourself.

Every one complains that he has no friends; and scarcely any one puts himself to the trouble of bringing those dispositions which are necessary to make or to preserve them. Young people have companions, but very rarely friends: pleasures unite them; but the bonds of

pleasure are not worthy of being those of friendship:—but I do not attempt a dissertation; I lightly touch on the duties of civil life. I refer to your heart, which will require a friend, and will teach you to feel the want of one. I leave it to your sensibility to instruct you in the duties of friendship.

19. If you would be a perfectly virtuous man, strive to regulate your self love, and to give it a proper object. Virtue consists in occasionally waving our own rights, and respecting those of others. If you seek happiness only for yourself, you will never find it; every body will dispute your good fortune with you: if you are willing that every body should partake of it, they will assist you to obtain it. All the vices favour self-love, and all the virtues join to oppose it—valour exposes it—modesty humbles it—generosity strips it—moderation mortifies it—and zeal for the public welfare sacrifices it at once.

Self-love is the preference of self to others; and virtue is the preference of others to self. We distinguish two sorts of self-love; one, natural, lawful, legitimate, and regulated by justice and by reason; the other, vicious and

corrupt. Our first object is ourselves: and we return to justice only through reflection. We know not how to love ourselves: we love ourselves too much, or we love ourselves improperly. To love ourselves as we ought, is to love virtue: to love vice, is to love ourselves with a blind and mistaken love.

20. We have sometimes seen persons advance themselves by evil ways; but if vice is elevated, it is not for a long season: it destroys itself by the same means, and by the same principles, which gained their footing. If you would be happy with security, it must be with innocence. There is no sure and durable empire, but that of virtue.

There are amible characters which have a natural and delicate congeniality with virtue: for those on whom nature has not bestowed this happy gift, good eyes, and a thorough knowledge of their true interests, is necessary, for the correction of their evil inclinations.—Thus it is that the understanding rectifies the heart.

21. The love of esteem, also, is the very soul of society: it unites us together:—I wish for your approbation, you desire mine. In retiring

from men, you retire from the virtues necessary to society: for when we are alone, we neglect ourselves: the world forces us to keep an eye upon our conduct.

22. Politenesss is the quality most necessary to intercourse; it is the art of bringing into action the exterior manners, which give us no security concerning the real character. Politeness is an imitation of virtue, which shows the outside of man such as he ought to be within: it discovers itself in every thing; in the air, language, and in actions.

There is a politeness of the mind, and a politeness of the manners: that of the mind consists in saying fine and delicate things; that of the manners in saying flattering and agreeable things.

I do not confine politeness merely to that intercourse of civilities and complements which custom has sanctioned: these are said without feeling, and received without gratitude: people overdo in this sort of commerce, and fall short upon more serious trial.

Politeness is a desire to please the persons with whom we are obliged to live; and to behave so that every body may be satisfied with

us; our superiors with our respects—our equals with our esteem—and our inferiors with our kindness. In a word, it consists in due care to please, and to say what is proper to every one. It values their good qualities, and acknowledges their superiority: when you thus elevate others, they will value you in your turn; they will give you the same place over others which you would yield to them; it is to the interest of their own self-love.

The way to please is, not to make others feel your superiorty, but to conceal it. There is a skill in politeness for the exercise of which you will be amply recompensed.

23. The greater part of mankind look only for pleasing manners: but when you are without these, your good qualities should be doubled. We should possess considerable merit, indeed, in order to its being visible through ill-manners; we must avoid, also, letting it be seen that we pay too much attention to self: a polite person never finds an opportunity of speaking of himself.

24. You know what sort of politeness is necessary in your behaviour to ladies. Young men, at present, seem to allow themselves to be very

deficient in this respect: a circumstance which discovers a neglected education.

Nothing is more shameful than to be voluntarily rude; but let the men behave as they will, they cannot take from the women the glory of having formed the greatest men of the last age. It is to the women that they owe gentleness of manners, delicacy of sentiment, and the elegance of gallantry, both in wit and manners.

25. To know how to praise, and to bestow your praise with propriety and justice, is a very rare qualification. The misanthrope cannot praise; his discernment is spoiled by his humour. The flatterer, in praising too much, discredits himself, and honours no one. The vain praise only that they may receive praise; they let it be too easily seen that they are not actuated by sentiment.—the little-minded applaud every thing, because they know not the value of things; they know not where to place rightly either esteem or contempt. The envious praise no one, lest they should create to themselves equals. A virtuous man praises where it is due; he has more pleasure in doing justice than in increasing his own reputation by lessening that

of others: people of delicacy and sensibility feel all these differences. If you wish that your praise should be useful, praise for the sake of others, not for yourself.

26. We should know how to live with competitors: nothing is more common than striving to rise above, or to destroy them; but there is a mode of conduct more noble than this: it is, never to attack them, and to endeavour to surpass them only in merit: it is excellent to yield to them the place which you believe to be theirs.

27. A virtuous man would rather be wanting in fortune than in justice. Dispute the prize of glory with yourself; and endeavour to acquire those virtues which will heighten those you already possess.

28. You should have a strong curb upon your vengeance; it may frequently be useful to cause yourself to be feared; but is almost always dangerous to take vengeance. Nothing is more weak than to do all the harm you can. The best method of avenging an injury is, not to imitate him who committed it. It is a spectacle worthy of the virtuous man, when patience is opposed to violence, and moderation to injustice.

Hatred, moreover puts you beneath those you hate. Do not justify your enemies! Do nothing that can absolve them! they will do you less injury than your failings. Little souls are cruel: great men have clemency. Cæsar said, that "The sweetest fruit of his victories was "the power of giving life to those who had de-"signed to destroy his own." Nothing is more glorious nor more delicate, than this sort of vengeance. As soon as your enemy repents and submits, you lose the right of vengeance.

The greater part of mankind employ in intercourse only those weaknesses which are subservient to society. Good men connect themselves by their virtues; the vulgar of all ranks by their pleasures; and the wicked by their crimes.

29. The table and the dice are their exercises and their dangers: love has his own: beauty is not always to be played with; it sometimes commands imperiously. Nothing is more shameful than to sacrifice to wine, reason, which ought to be the guide of man. To give yourself up to voluptuousness is degradation: the best security is in not accustoming yourself to it: it should seem that the very soul of the voluptuous man is in its keeping.

As to gaming, it is an overthrow of all decorum. The prince forgets his dignity, and the female her modesty. Absolute gambling has within itself all the evils of society. It gives license to certain hours for the unbridled domination of ruin and hatred: it is a hard ordeal for probity: few people keep themselves pure in this respect at play.

30. The most necessary disposition for lasting pleasures is, the capability of passing by them. The voluptuous man is a stranger to the reasonable part of mankind. Remember that, close to the highest pleasures, there are arts to interrupt their existence, or vexation to finish it.

Wisdom attends on love and glory, to defend them from the low condition into which the sensualist is cast; but we must take the favourable hour for preserving the passions: in the beginning they obey, afterwards they command: they are more easily overcome than satisfied.

31. Keep yourself from envy: it is the lowest and most shameful passion in the world: it is always disavowed. Envy is the shadow of glory, as glory is the shadow of virtue. The most distinguishing sign that we are born with great qualities is, that we can live without envying.

32. A man of quality cannot be aimable without liberality. The miser must displease. He has in him an obstacle to all the virtues: he has neither justice nor humanity. As soon as we abandon ourselves to avarice, we renounce glory: it has been said that there have been illustrious villains, but never illustrious misers.

Though liberality is a gift of nature, yet if we have a disposition to the opposite vice, it may, by judgment and reflection, be corrected. The miser enjoys nothing.

It has been said that money is a good servant to a bad master: it is good only according to the use to which it is applied.

The miserly are more wretched than the poor. The love of riches is the foundation of all the vices; as disinterestedness is the principle of all the virtues.

There is good reason for giving to money, in the catalogue of riches, the first rank: inasmuch as it is, with the greater part of mankind, the first object of pursuit: yet virtue, glory, and exalted reputation, are infinitely above the gifts of fortune.

The most delightful pleasure to virtuous men,

is that of doing good, and comforting the miserable. What a difference there is between having a little more money, or of knowing how to part with it, for the production of true pleasure, and spending it in a manner, contrary to the reputation of goodness and generosity! it is a sacrifice which you make to your glory. Take the grounds of your liberality upon yourself; it is excellent husbandry, and will contribute to your elevation and good report.

Great reputation is a vast treasure. It must not be imagined that it is only great fortunes which are able to do good; every one in his rank can do it, if he pays proper attention to himself and others: preserve this sentiment in your heart, and you will find means of gratifying it: occasions will spring up before your eyes; and there are but too many of the unfortunate to solicit.

Liberality is characterised by the manner of giving. The liberal double the worth of the present by sentiment; the avaricious destroy by regret. Liberality never ruined any one. It is not avarice which builds up families: these are supported by justice, by moderation, and good faith. Liberality is one of the duties of high

birth. When you do good, you only pay a debt: but prudence, of course must be your guide: the principles of prodigality are pernicious, but the consequences are dangerous.

34. Few people know how to live with their inferiors. The great opinion which we have of ourselves, causes us to look at those beneath us as of a separate species. How contrary are these sentiments to humanity! If you would acquire a great name, you must be accessible and affable: the profession of arms will not allow you to dispense with these duties. Germanicus was adored by his soldiers. In order to know what they thought of him, he walked at evening through the camp, and heard what they said at their little repasts, where they indulged themselves in the liberty of canvassing the merits of their general. "He went," says Tacitus, "to enjoy his reputation and his glory."

We should command by example and not by authority: admiration forces imitation better than commandment can: and to live in indolence while you treat your soldiers with rigour, is to be their tyrant not their general.

35. Consider with what view the power of commanding has been instituted, and in what

manner it ought to be exercised. It is virtue—it is the respect which naturally belongs to virtue—that has led men to consent to obedience. You are an usurper of authority, from the moment in which you cease to hold it on these terms. In an empire where reason should be mistress, all would be equal, and distinctions would be given to virtue alone.

Humanity suffers from the extreme difference which fortune has placed between man and man. It is merit which ought to separate you from the people, and not either rank or pride. Regard the advantages of birth and rank, as merely the goods which fortune lends you; and not as distinctions attached to your existence and making part of yourself. If your condition raises you above the people, do not forget that you are still linked with the commonality of men by your failings; and that justice stops the progress of your pride, which attempts the separation.

Observe that the first laws to which you owe obedience, are those of humanity: remember that you are a man, and that you are commanding men. The son of Marcus Aurelius having lost his preceptor, the courtiers blamed him for

weeping: Marcus Aurelius said, "suffer my son to be a man before he is an emperor."

Always forget what you are, whenever humanity makes the demand: but never forget it when true glory would remind you. In a word, if you have authority, use it only for the good of others. If you are great, instead of abasing, draw them near to you: never make them feel their inferiority, and live with them as you wish your superiors to live with you.

36. Few men know how to live with themselves; they try to escape, and seek happiness abroad. You must, if possible, establish your happiness in yourself, and find there an equivalent for the possessions which fortune may have denied you: this will give you independence; but it should be a principle of reason which thus leads you to yourself, and not an estrangement from mankind.

You love solitude; you are reproached for too much privacy: I do not condemn this taste; but you must not suffer it to injure the social virtues. "Retire into yourself," said Marcus Antonius; practise frequently this retirement of the soul: you will refresh yourself. Learn some maxims which may reanimate your reason, and

fortify your principles. Retirement will place you in the society of the best authors: people of ability do not heap up knowledge, but select it.

37. See that your studies pervade your manners, and that the product of your reading turns to virtue. Endeavour to penetrate into the first principles of things; and do not suffer yourself to be too much governed by the opinions of the vulgar.

Your ordinary reading should be history; but accompany it with reflection. When you try only to fill your memory with facts, or to adorn your mind with the thoughts and opinions of authors, you do but form a magazine of the ideas of others; a quarter of an hour of reflection enlarges and forms the mind more than considerable reading. It is not the want of knowledge that is to be feared: it is the error of false judgment.

Reflection is the guide which leads to truth: consider facts only as authorities, on which reason has to rest; or as subjects on which it may exercise itself.

History will instruct you in your profession; but, after drawing from it what may be useful

in your occupation, a moral use may be made of it, which is still more important.

The first science of man is man. Leave politics to ministers; and to princes what belongs to grandeur: but look for the man in the prince: observe him in the track of common life—remark into what abasement he falls when he abandons himself to passion. Disorderly conduct is always followed by unfortunate events.

To study history, is to study the passions and the opinions of men: it is to probe them—it is to unmask those actions which, veiled and consecrated by success, appear magnanimous; but which often become contemptible in our eyes as soon as their motives are known. Nothing is more equivocal than the actions of mankind: we must go up to principles if we would know them. It is necessary, that before you applaud, you should know the spirit of our actions.

We do little good, and much evil; and we have, beside, learned the secret of spoiling and making evil of the little good we do.

Look at princes in history and elsewhere, as the characters of a theatre: they interest you only by qualities which they possess in common

with yourself: this is so true, that historians are more attached to painting men than kings, and that those who show them to us in domestic situations please us still more: we recognize ourselves in them—we love to perceive in the great the marks of our own failings—the discovery reconciles us, in a certain degree, to our own inferiority, and lifts us, in some sort, to their exaltation. To conclude—regard history as the record of the times, and the picture of the manners, from which you may gather information without wounding your vanity.

38. I must exhort you, my son, to labour at the improvement of your heart, much more than at the perfecting your mind: the former ought to be the study of your whole life. The true greatness of man is in the heart: this must be elevated, before we can aspire at great things, and even before we can dare to think ourselves worthy of them. It is as excellent, when in private, to glory in oneself, as, when in public, it is ridiculous.

Entertain thoughts and sentiments that are worthy of you. Virtue exalts the condition of man, as vice degrades it. If you are unfortunate enough to be without a straight forward

heart, you must, for your own interest sake, amend it. No one is estimable but on account of his heart, no one is happy but on account of his heart, since his happiness depends only on his manner of feeling. If your sentiments lead you but to frivolous passions, you will be the shuttlecock of your vain attachments: they will present you, indeed with flowers: "but guard yourself," says Montagne, "guard yourself against the treason of your pleasures!"

You must only lend yourself to what is pleasant; as soon as you give yourself up to it, you are preparing sorrows. The greater part of mankind make use of the first part of life to make the other miserable. Neither must you abandon reason in your pleasures, if you wish to find her again in your troubles.

39. In short, take good care of your heart: it is the source of innocence and happiness. It is not paying too much for the liberty of our mind and heart, even if we purchase it by the sacrifice of our pleasures, as has been well said, by a man of excellent wit. Never hope, then, to return from voluptuousness with glory—from the seductions of luxury with the recompense of virtue: but, in abandoning pleasures, you

will find, elsewhere, indemnification: of this, there are various kinds: glory and truth have their delights; and there are, beside, the luxuries of the heart and of the soul.

Learn also, to fear and respect yourself.—The basis of happiness is the peace of the soul, and the secret testimony of the conscience. By the word conscience, I understand that interior feeling of delicate honour, which assures you that you have nothing to reproach yourself with. Once more, then, how happy it is to know how to live with yourself; to meet yourself with pleasure; to take leave without regret! The world is, then, less necessary to you: but take care that you do not from this circumstance grow disgusted with it. You must not feel a sentiment of estrangement from mankind: it will shun you, as soon as you shun it: you have need of the world: you are neither of an age nor of a profession that permit you to do without it: but, when a man knows how to live with himself and with the world, he has two pleasures which sustain each other.

40. The sentiment of glory can contribute greatly to your elevation and happiness; but it can also render you unhappy and lightly esteemed if you know not how to govern it: it is the

most lively and most durable of all desires. The love of glory is the last feeling that abandons us; but we must not confound this feeling with that of vanity. Vanity seeks the approbation of others: true glory, the secret testimony of conscience. Seek to satisfy the sentiment of glory that is in you: assure yourself of this interior testimony: your tribunal is within yourself; why seek it elsewhere? You can always be the judge of what you approve. When your good qualities are disputed by those who know you not, be your own comforter. It is of less consequence that you appear an honest man, than that you are so. Those who care not for the approbation of others, but only endeavour to merit it, obtain both the one and the other. What connection is there between the grandeur of man and the littleness of the things of which he is vain! Nothing is so ill-assorted as his dignity with the vanity which he indulges in an infinity of frivolous things: glory so wrongly founded marks a deplorable absence of merit. Persons of true greatness are not subject to the visions of vain-glory.

41. You must, if it be possible, my son, be content with your condition. Nothing is more

rare nor more estimable than persons who are satisfied: this is our fault. There is no condition so bad as not to have its good side: every condition has its point of view: we should know how to take it: it is not the fault of the situations but of ourselves. We have much more reason to complain of our humour than of our fortune. We impute to events the faults of our chagrin; the evil is in ourselves; let us not look elsewhere. In mollifying our humour, we frequently change our fortune. It is easier to accommodate ourselves to things, than to accommodate things to us. Frequently, an endeavour to seek a remedy aggravates the evil; and imagination, in good understanding with our murmurings, increases and strengthens it; attention to evils facilitates their approach, and gains their admittance, to the soul. A useless resistance delays the acquirement of that habit of content which counteracts the evils of our condition. We must yield to misfortunes, and turn them over to patience; it is she alone who can soften them.

If you would do yourself justice, you should be content with your situation. I dare say, that, after the loss we have suffered, if you had had

another mother, you would have had still more reason to complain. Pay attention to the advantages of your condition, and you will feel less of its evils. A wise man, in the same situation, has more blessings, and fewer pains.

We must take it into the account that there is no situation without its troubles: it is in the condition of human life—nothing is pure, every thing is mixed. He would enfranchise himself from the operation of the general law, who pretends to perpetual happiness: those persons who appear to you most happy, would, if you knew their fortune, or their hearts, cease to be regarded by you as secure. The most elevated are often the most unhappy. What with great employments, and the opinions of the vulgar, they are always agitated: it is reason, and not situation, which calms the cares of the soul: if you are wise, fortune can neither augment nor diminish your felicity.

42. Judge from yourself, and not from the opinions of others. Evils and disorders arise from false judgment; false judgment from false sentiments; and false sentiments from our commerce with mankind: you always come from it more imperfect than before. To weaken the

impression that it makes upon you, and to moderate your desires and your chagrins, remember that time brings both your pains and your pleasures; that every instant, how young soever you may be, takes from you a part of yourself; that every thing is continually entering the abyss of the past, whence nothing returns.

43. Nothing, though it be ever so great, receives better treatment, in this respect, than yourself. The honours, the dignities, the preferences established among men, are spectacles and ceremonies void of reality: do not believe that they are qualities attached to human existence. Thus it is that you should regard those who are above you: but do not lose sight of an infinite number of unfortunate people who are beneath: you owe to chance only, the distinction that is between you and them; but pride, and the high opinion we entertain of ourselves, cause us to look upon our good fortune as our due, and upon our privations as a robbery: you are well aware that, than these sentiments, nothing can be more unjust.

Enjoy, my son, the advantages of your condition; but suffer its evils with calmness. Remember, that, wherever there are men, there

is misfortune. Possess, if possible, an enlarged mind, capable of regarding accidents as foreseen and provided for. In conclusion, recollect, that happiness depends upon manners and conduct; but that the fulness of felicity is to be sought in innocence: there it will never fail to be found.

ADVICE

OF A

MOTHER TO HER DAUGHTER.

1. THE education of women has always been neglected: men, only, are attended to; and, as if women were of a separate species, they are abandoned to themselves without assistance: it is forgot that they form one half of mankind—that they are united with the other by strict alliances—that they create the happiness or misery of men, who always feel the want of reasonable companions; that it is by them families are raised or destroyed—that to them the education of children, during their earliest years, the season in which the most lively and deep impressions are received, is confided. What can it be expected that they should learn, since they are abandoned from their infancy to

governesses, who, being commonly taken from among the vulgar, fill them with low sentiments, nourish in them all the mean passions, and put superstition in the place of religion! It would be more rational to expect to render certain virtues hereditary by causing them to pass from the mother to the children, than to preserve what is good by substitutions. Nothing then, is more ill-advised than the education which is given to young people; they are destined only to please—they are instructed only in accomplishments—their self-love is strengthened—they are given up to effeminacy, to the world, to false opinions—lessons of virtue and fortitude are never given them; it is injustice, or rather folly, to suppose that the evils of such an education as this, should not turn upon themselves.

2. To be estimable, my child, it is not sufficient that you submit yourself outwardly to good manners; it is sentiment which forms the character, which leads the mind, which governs the desires, which gives substance and permanency to all our virtues. What should be the principle of sentiment? religion! When this is graven on our heart, sentiment is the source, from whence all the virtues flow: then, all the

duties range themselves in their proper order. It is not sufficient for the guidance of young persons, that they are compelled to do their duty: they should be taught to love it: authority is the tyrant of outward behaviour; but it has no controul over the inward desires. When rules of conduct are prescribed, the reasons and motives ought to be shown; so that a taste may be excited for what is advised.

We have so much interest in the practice of virtue that we never can have reason to regard it as an enemy, but, rather as the source of happiness, of honour, and of peace.

You are entering the world: go into it, my dear, with fixed principles: you cannot fortify yourself too much against what awaits you there: carry with you all your religion; nourish it in your heart by sentiment:—support it in your mind by reflection, and by suitable reading.

Nothing is more needful, nor more conducive to our happiness, than to preserve a sentiment which leads us to love and to hope—which affords us a consolatory prospect—which adapts itself to all seasons—which lays the foundation of all the duties—which is responsible for us to ourselves, and which is our guaranty to others.

4. What support will not religion afford you against the evils with which you are threatened? for a certain number of sorrows will inevitably befal you. An ancient writer said that "he would envelope himself in the mantle of his virtue:" do you envelope yourself with the mantle of your religion: this will be a great support for you against the foibles of youth, and a sure asylum in more advanced age.

Women, who have fed their minds with the maxims of fashion, fall into a deplorable void as they advance in years. The world forsakes them, and their reason likewise departs: to what shall they betake themselves? the past furnishes regret: the present, vexations; and the future, fears. Religion calms all—consoles all: in uniting you with her God, it reconciles you with the world, and with yourself.

3. A young person on entering the world, has a high idea of the happiness which it is to yield—she seeks to enjoy it: this is the source of her inquietudes—she runs after her own idea—she hopes for perfect happiness: this it is which makes her fickle and inconstant.

The pleasures of the world are deceivers: they promise more than they give. They give us uneasiness in their pursuits, fail to satisfy us

in their possessions, and throw us into despair by their loss.

4. To give consistency to your desires, expect neither solid nor durable happiness. Honours and riches confer but a momentary pleasure—their possessions create new desires—habit renders pleasures worthless. Before tasting them, you can pass them without regret: instead of this, possession renders that necessary which was superfluous: you are less contented than you was before. In possessing, you have accustomed yourself to possession, and in losing, you feel a void and a want. That which is most severely felt, is the passage from one condition to another: it is the interval between an unhappy, and a happy season. As soon as habit is established, the sentiment of pleasure vanishes. We should be gainers, if we could, at once, draw from our reason all that is necessary to our happiness. Experience turns us inward upon ourselves; spare yourself what it costs you, and speak of happiness in a firm and determinate tone. *True felicity consists in peace of mind, in reason, and in the fulfilment of our duties.* Never let us think ourselves happy, my child, save when we feel our pleasures spring from the bottom of our soul.—These re-

flections are too serious for a young person, and belong to riper years: I believe, however, that your capacity is already sufficient. We cannot engrave too deeply within us the maxims of wisdom: the impression which she leaves is always faint; but it must be allowed that, those who reflect, and who fill their hearts with principles, are nearer virtue than those who reject them. If we are unhappy enough to fail in our duty, at least we ought to love it: let us use these principles, my child, as a continual aid to virtue.

5. There are two prejudices, some will say, which ought to be obeyed: religion and honour. It is wrong to speak of religion as a prejudice: prejudice is an opinion which will serve either error or truth: this term should never be applied but to uncertain things; and religion is not one of these.

Though honour is the fabric of man, nothing is more clear than the evils which those suffer who have stripped themselves of it: it is dangerous to give it up; it is even necessary that we should exert ourselves to fortify our minds with this sentiment; since it should be the rule of our life, and since nothing is more destructive of repose, nor gives us more inconsistent conduct than to think in one man

ner, and reason in another. Preserve to yourself, then, in as great a degree as you can, those sentiments which guide your conduct; strengthen within yourself the prejudice of honour, which your native delicacy will carry to the degree of scrupulosity.

6. Do not relax from these principles, nor ever look upon the virtue of women as a virtue ordained only by custom: you have two tribunals before which you must pass—conscience and the world: you may escape that of the world, but you cannot escape that of conscience. You owe to yourself the testimony that you are a virtuous person; but, in the mean time, you must not neglect the approbation of the public; because, from contempt of approbation, springs contempt of virtue.

7. Shame is a sentiment, from which, with good management, great advantages may be drawn; I do not speak of that false shame which only troubles our repose, without turning to the advantage of our manners: I speak of that which preserves us from evil by the fear of dishonour. It must be confessed, that this shame is sometimes the most faithful guardian of the virtue of women.

8. There are great virtues, which carried to

a certain degree, frequently obtain pardon for faults: supreme valour in men, and extreme chastity in women. Agrippa, wife of Germanicus, has been pardoned every thing for the sake of her chastity. This princess was ambitious and haughty; but, says Tacitus, "all her passions were consecrated by her chastity."

If you are sensible and delicate respecting your reputation—if you are fearful of being attacked in your essential virtues, there is a sure method of calming your fears—it is to be virtuous. Take care only to purify your sentiments: take care to be satisfied with yourself.

9. The showy virtues do not fall to the lot of women; but many virtues are simple and peaceful. Renown does not belong to us. An ancient writer says, that "the great virtues are for men;" he gives to women nothing but the sole merit of being unknown; "and it is not those," adds he, "who are most praised, that are best praised, but those of whom nothing is said." This idea appears to me to be false; but, to put the maxim it affords into practice, I imagine that we should avoid fame and the world—that we should attach ourselves always to modesty, and be satisfied with being our own spectator.

10. The virtues of women are difficult, because the hope of glory does not assist their practice.—Live within yourself—regulate yourself and your family—be simple, just, and modest: hard virtues, because they are obscure.—Considerable merit is needful to assist us to fly from praise, and much courage to consent to be virtuous, when no one is looker on. Greatness and reputation are the supports of our weakness. The mind reposes upon the public approbation; and true glory consists in passing by it. Let it not have place among the motives of your actions; it is enough that it be your reward.

11. You must, most especially, my daughter, be convinced in your own mind, that rectitude and happiness exist together; that you never can be happy but through virtue; and seldom, if ever, unhappy but through disorder. Did every one rigorously examine himself, he would find, that he has never experienced pungent sorrow, but through some error of his own; or through the failure of some virtue. Sorrow always follows the loss of innocence; but there is in the train of virtue a sweet sentiment, which will reward her faithful adherents.

12. Do not, however, believe that modesty

may be your only virtue. There are many women who know no other, and who persuade themselves that this releases them from all the duties of society; they think that they may be wanting in all the rest, and be proud and slanderous. Anne de Bretagne, a proud and ostentatious princess, tyranized over Louis XII. and this good prince frequently said, in yielding matters to her, "we must pay well for the chastity of wives." Do not let yours be paid for; remember, on the contrary, that is virtue which benefits no one but yourself, and that it loses its chief lustre when unaccompanied by others.

13. You should possess a modesty exquisitely sensible: the licentiousness of the mind passes to the mouth, and gives birth to disorderly conversation. Even the most lively passions require a certain modesty, to display them in a seducing form; it ought to spread itself over all your actions—it ought to cover and adorn your whole person.

It has been said that Jupiter, in creating the passions, gave each its separate abode; but modesty was forgot, and, when she presented herself, not knowing where to place her, he permitted her to associate with all the rest. Since

that time, she has been inseparable. She is the friend of truth, and betrays the falsehood that dares attack her—she is linked and united in a particular manner with love—she accompanies him always, and frequently announces and detects him: in short love loses his charms when he is without her: there is no greater beauty in a young person than modesty.

14. Let your first clothing, then, be modesty, it has great advantages, it augments beauty, and serves as a veil to plainness: modesty is the supplement of beauty. The greatest misfortune of plainness is, that it hides the merit of women; we do not go in search of the qualities of the mind and heart in a disagreeable figure: it is a great thing when merit can push itself into light through a disagreeable exterior.

15. You are not born without agreeable features, but you are not a beauty; this should lead you to lay up a store of merit: you will not be admired for nothing.—Beauty has great advantages:—An ancient has said "that it is a tyrannous court, and the first privilege of nature; and that fine persons bear on their front, letters of recommendation." Beauty inspires a sentiment of gentleness, which turns to its advantage: If you have not these advantages, you will be judged with rigour.

16. Since women are destined to please, you must not neglect talents and accomplishments; but you must think more of acquiring substantial merit than of frivolous things. Nothing is is shorter than the reign of beauty; nothing is more melancholy than the lives of women who have been nothing but beauties. If you gain attachment by accomplishments, lead it on by friendship, and let it fix itself with you through merit.

17. It is difficult to give certain rules for pleasing. Graces without merit will not please long; and merit without graces may gain esteem, but cannot attract interest: women then must possess merit of an amiable kind; and join the graces with the virtues. I do not confine the virtues of women to modesty only; I give it a wider field. A virtuous woman has the masculine virtues of friendship, probity, fidelity to duty: an aimable woman ought to have, not only the exterior graces, but the graces of the heart and feelings. Nothing is more difficult than to try to please without putting on an air of coquetry. It is more by their faults than by their good qualities, that women please the men of the world: these would profit by

the weaknesses of amible persons: they can make nothing of their virtues; they do not seek the estimable, they had rather be amused by those who are less worthy of esteem, than be forced to admire the virtuous.

18. Those who wish to please, ought to study the human heart. Men are much more touched with the new than with the excellent; but this flower of novelty soon fades: what pleases because it is new, displeases as soon as it is common. To gratify this taste with novelty, you should have in yourself many resources and various sorts of merit; you must not confine yourself to particular accomplishments; you must present to the mind, a variety of graces and merit, to sustain the attachment, and gratify the same object with all the pleasures of variety.

19. Women are born with an ardent desire to please: as they find the roads to glory and authority shut against them, they take another route to gain them, and indemnify themselves by accomplishments. Beauty deceives the person who possesses it; it enervates the soul; meanwhile, we should remember that the difference is but that of a small number of years, between a fine women and her that is no longer

such. Overcome this excessive desire of pleasing; or, at least, do not let it be seen. We must set bounds to dress, and not be occupied by it: true grace upon apparel too nicely invented: we ought to comply with the world as with an unpleasant servitude, and yield only what we cannot refuse. Fashion would be reasonable if it could fix itself upon perfection, as to commodity and good taste; but to be always changing, is fickleness rather than good taste.

Good taste rejects excessive delicacy; it treats little things as littleness, and is not occupied by them. Propriety is a certain agreement in things, and holds its rank among what is elegant; but it becomes littleness as soon as it goes beyond this; it is the part of an enlightened mind, rather to neglect things of lesser importance, than to render itself too minute.

20. Young people are apt to tire: as they are unacquainted with every thing, they run with inquietude after every object they see; weariness, however, is not the least of the evils they have to fear. Excessive mirth is not among the train of the virtues: whatever is called ardent pleasure, is dangerous.

When an individual is sufficiently rigid to avoid wounding the decencies of life, and to live within the bounds prescribed by modesty, the heart, as soon as dissipation enters it, gives to the whole soul, certain dispiritedness, that creates a disgust for whatever is called virtue; it will impede your progress and dissuade you from your duty. A young person does not see the consequences of this poison, the least evil effects of which are, those of troubling the peaceableness of life, spoiling the taste, and rendering all simple pleasures insipid.

21. Resort to public spectacles but little. There is no dignity in being always to be seen; there is also a difficulty in preserving perfect modesty amid extreme dissipation; to give way to this sort of conduct is not to know our own interests. If you have beauty, it is wrong to make it common with the public, by perpetually displaying yourself; and if you are destitute of attractions, you ought to be still more reserved; besides, a frequent attendance at public places enervates the taste.

When an individual, who has lived to pleasure alone, forsakes at once the objects of his former pursuits, whether because the relish is

lost or that reason forbids the gratification, the soul falls into a vast void. If, then, you would make your pleasures and amusements lasting, let them be only your recreations from more serious business. Endeavour to make reason your companion, and let not pleasures, in their absence, leave you void and in want.

We should hold a tight rein over our desires; they are preserved by innocence, and disordered by irregularity.

22. When the heart is sound, we enter into every thing, and every thing turns to pleasure. We seek pleasure with a bad taste; we frequently fancy ourselves delicate when we are only disgusted. When the heart and mind are unspoiled by sentiment which seduced the imagination, or by any violent passion, joy is easily found; health and innocence are its true sources; but, as soon as we have the misfortune to be accustomed to dissipation, we become insensible to the calm pleasures. The taste is spoiled by diversions; we become so entirely vitiated by the ardent pleasures, that we cannot return to the simple.

We should avoid violent agitations of the spirits, which lead to weariness and disgust;

they are most to be feared for young persons, who make but little resistance against their feelings. "Temperance," says an ancient writer, "is the best maker of pleasure." With this temperance, which gives health both to the mind and the body, there is always enjoyed a soft and equable pleasure; the mind asks not for shows, nor dissipation, nor expense: reading, or work, or conversation, give a more pure enjoyment, than the bustle of the greatest pleasures. In a word, innocent pleasures are the best; they are always at hand; they are beneficial; they cannot be bought too dearly. The others flatter, but they betray: the temperament of the soul, as well as that of the body, is altered by them, and spoiled.

23. Let there be method in all your pursuits and in all your actions: it would be a happiness to have no need of regard to fortune; but as yours is confined, you must attend to it with regularity: be careful over your expenses: if you do not use moderation, you will soon see your affairs in disorder; as soon as you lose sight of economy, you can answer for nothing.

Extravagance draws on ruin;—ruin is almost always followed by a corruption of morals;

but, in order to be prudent, it is not necessary to be miserly: be persuaded that avarice gains but little, and dishonours much. In pursuing a prudent line of conduct, we should seek only to avoid the shame and injustice which belong to the character of prodigality: we should retrench superfluous expenses, only to enable ourselves to bear those which propriety, friendship, and charity demand.

It is good order, and not an attention to little things, which produces great profits. Pliny, in giving up a bond for a considerable sum, said to his friend; "I have little wealth, and I am obliged to enter into great expenses: but I have made a fund of my frugality; and it is thence that I draw for the service of my friends." Take from your tastes and pleasures, that you may be able to satisfy the feeling of generosity which every person with a good heart entertains.

Never listen to the cravings of vanity. "We must," says one, "be like others;" and this "like" extends a great way. Encourage a noble emulation. Do not suffer any person to possess more honour, more probity, more rectitude than yourself. Attend to the demands of

virtue:—the poverty of the soul, is worse than that of fortune.

24. While you are yet young, form your reputation—increase your respectability—arrange your affairs; in more advanced life the task will be less easy. Charles V. said that, "fortune loves the young." In youth, every thing assists you; every thing is offered to you; the young govern without knowing that they do so. In elder life, nothing assists you; you have no longer that seducing charm which animates every thing; you have nothing for you but reason and truth, which do not, ordinarily, prevail with the world.

"You go," says Montagne, to some young people, "you go toward reputation and credit; I am returning from them." While you are young, you should seek for nothing but the acquisition of virtue. In all your enterprises, and in all your actions, aim at the most perfect; attempt no project, begin nothing, without saying to yourself—cannot I do better? You will insensibly acquire a habit of justice and virtue which will render their practice easy. Follow the advice which Seneca gave to his friend Lucilius. "Chuse among the characters of the

great, that which appears to you most worthy: do nothing but in the imagined presence of that man: give him an account of all your actions." Happy is he who is worthy of being chosen! This plan is the more easy because young people have a natural disposition to imitation. Least is hazarded when we make our choice among the models of antiquity: because, in general, these present only great examples. Among the moderns, the practice might have its inconveniences: copies rarely succeed: it has long been said, that every copy should tremble before its original; it never should be followed too far: this would take away all natural character, which in general, is the most just, and most simple. We are apt to relax when we have fixed upon a model; and, what is more, part of our faults arise from the imitation. Learn, then, to fear and to respect yourself—let your own delicacy be your censor.

25. Seek to make yourself happy in your station: turn every thing to advantage; a thousand benefits escape you for want of application: we can be happy only through attention and comparison.

The greater the means you have, the more

you are drawn from yourself, and the more your dissipation is extended. It is not possession that renders us happy, but enjoyment:—and enjoyment arises from attention.

If we know how to enjoy our own condition, we shall neither be ambitious nor envious; all within will be at peace; but we do not live enough in the present—our desires and our hopes carry us unceasingly toward the future.

There are two sorts of madmen in the world: the one lives always in the future, and subsists only upon hopes; and, as persons of this description are not wise enough to reckon justly with hope, they pass their whole lives in discontent. Reasonable persons busy themselves with no desires but such as are within their reach; they are not often disappointed; when they are, they console themselves—they draw from ignorance and error all the good that can be drawn, and which is, the pleasure of hoping. They know farther, that the enjoyment of desired objects end, either through possession, or through the impossibility of obtention: with these reflections, sensible people calm themselves. There is another sort of madmen, who live too much upon the present, and neglect the future:

these people ruin their fortune, their reputation, and their relish of pleasure, for want of sufficient management. Those who are wise, connect the two periods, the present and the future; and enjoy the one, without neglecting the other.

26. It is our duty, my child, to employ our time: what use do we make of it? Few people know how to estimate it according to its just value. "Take account," says an ancient author, "of all your hours; to the end, that, having profited by the present, you may have less need of the future." Time flies with rapidity:—learn to live; that is to say, to make a good use of life—but life is consumed in vain hopes, in running after fortune or in waiting for her favour. All men feel the emptiness of their condition, always occupied without being full. Remember that life consists, not in the space of time, but, in the use to which it is applied: reflect that you have a mind to cultivate and nourish with truth, a heart to purify and conduct, and a religious worship to render.

As the first years of life are precious, remember my daughter, to employ them well. While impressions are easily made, adorn your memory with valuable things; reflect that you are

making provision for your whole life. Memory is formed and extended by exercise.

27. Do not extinguish in yourself the sentiment of curiosity; it is only necessary that you should guide it, and give it a good object. Curiosity is a beginning of knowledge, which will enable you to proceed farther and more swiftly in the road of truth; it is a natural inclination which proceeds in the van of instruction; it must not be checked by indolence and weakness.

It is beneficial for young people, that they attend to substantial science. Greek and Roman history elevates the soul, and nourishes courage by the great actions which it displays. No one should be ignorant of the history of his own country. I should not even censure a little philosophy, if the individual is capable of this study; it infuses precision in the mind, connects the ideas, and teaches justness of thinking. I should also approve of moral inquiries. By dint of reading Cicero, Pliny, and others, we gain a love of virtue: an insensible impression is made, which turns to the benefit of society. The inclination to vice is corrected by the example of so many virtues; and you will rarely find a bad disposition united with a taste for

this sort of reading. No one can love to see that, which accuses and condemns him every day.

As to the languages, though a woman ought to be content with speaking that of her own country, yet I would not oppose an inclination for the Latin: it will open the door of all the sciences—it will introduce you to the society of the best characters of all ages. Women willingly learn the Italian; this appears to me to be dangerous, it is the language of love. The Italian authors are far from chaste; there prevails in their writings a play upon words, a lawlessness of imagination, which is the contrary of justness of thought.

Poetry may have its inconveniences; I should find it difficult however, to forbid your reading the fine tragedies of Corneille; but, in truth, the best will often give you lessons of virtue, and yet leave the impression of vice.

The reading of novels is more dangerous; I would not have you indulge in it much—it plants errors in the mind. Novels, seldom bearing resemblance to truth, kindle the imagination, weaken modesty, disorder the heart, and increase and precipitate the disposition of young

persons to sensibility. There is no occasion for increasing the charm nor the illusion of love; the more it is softened, the more modest it is, and the more dangerous. I would not forbid you novels; all forbiddings wound the freedom of the mind, and increase desire: but you should accustom yourself as much as possible to more solid reading, which ornaments the mind and fortifies the heart: we cannot too earnestly avoid all that leaves impressions difficult to be effaced.

28. Moderate your taste for the extraordinary sciences, they are dangerous; and they seldom give any thing but pride; they weaken the flight of the soul. If you have a vast, active, and lively imagination, and an imagination which nothing can stop; it is better to occupy such a disposition with the sciences, than to turn it to the profit of the passions;—but remember that girls ought to possess almost as much delicacy with respect to the sciences, as to vices.

Have a guard, then, against a taste for wit: do not dissipate your mind by running after vain sciences, and those which are above your reach. There is much more for us to enjoy than to know. We possess knowledge proper and necessary to

our welfare; but we will not stop here—we run after truths that are not made for us.

29. A young person should have docility, and not too much confidence in herself; but, on the other hand, this docility must not be carried too far. In matters of religion, we must yield to authorities; but upon all other subjects, we should receive nothing except reason and evidence. In giving too much latitude to docility, you trench upon the rights of reason, and make no other use of your understanding than to weaken it. It is giving too narrow bounds to your ideas, when you confine them within those of others. The testimony of men can deserve evidence only in the degree of certainty that there is of their real knowledge of facts. There is no prescription against truth; it is for all persons, at all times. In a word, as a great man has said: "To be a christian, you should believe blindly; and to be wise, you should see clearly."

30. Accustom yourself to the exercise of your judgment, and to make more use of this than of your memory. We fill our heads with unconnected thoughts, and draw nothing from its proper funds. We fancy ourselves to have advanced greatly, when we have filled our memory

with anecdotes and facts; but this fulness seldom contributes to the improvement of the mind. You must accustom yourself to thinking: the mind enlarges and expands by exercise. Few persons make use of what with us is an idle talent, the art of thinking.

Neither historic facts, nor the opinions of philosophers, can defend you against pressing misfortune; you will not find yourself the stronger. If affliction comes upon you, will you have recourse to Seneca or Epictetus? Is it by their reason you are to be consoled? ought not your own to undertake the charge. Sustain yourself with your own treasures—make provision in times of scarcity for times of trouble which await you: you will be much better supported by your own reason than by that of others.

31. If you can regulate your imagination, and render it submissive to your reason, you have made a great advance toward your perfection and happiness. Women are generally governed by their imagination; as they are not engaged with any thing serious, and are not in their whole life charged with the care of their

fortune, nor with the conduct of their affairs, they are given up to nothing but pleasures.

32. To be happy, you must think rightly.—We should entertain great respect for common opinions, especially such as regard religion; but we ought to think very differently from the people upon what is called morality and the happiness of life. By the people, I mean all who think basely and commonly: the court is full of such; the world talks of nothing but fortune and credit; nothing is heard but, "pursue your way, hasten your advance;" while wisdom says: "lower your desires to things simple—chuse a life private but tranquil; shun tumult, fly the croud." The recompense of virtue is not wholly in renown; it consists in the testimony of your own conscience. Cannot great virtue reconcile you to the loss of glory?

Accustom yourself to solitude; nothing is more useful; nothing is more necessary for weakening the impression of external objects. You ought, then, from time to time, to retire from the world, to set yourself apart; keep a few hours in the day for reading and reflection. "Reflection," says a father of the church, "is the eye of the soul; it is through this, that

knowledge and truth are introduced. I lead him into solitude, and then I speak to his heart." It is there that truth imparts her lessons—that prejudices vanish—that prepossession weakens,—that opinion, which governs all things, begins to lose its authority. When we cast our eyes upon the inutility, the absolute void, of life, we are compelled to say with Pliny: "It is better to pass our lives with nothing to do than in doing nothing."

I have already told you, my daughter, that happiness consists in the peace of the soul; you cannot enjoy the pleasures of the mind without health of mind; almost every thing is pleasure to an healthful mind. In order to live tranquilly, observe the following rules. The first is, not to give yourself to pleasures—you should only lend yourself—not to attend too much to the world, lest you should be deceived—to be yourself your principal friend. Solitude, likewise, promotes tranquillity, and is the friend of wisdom. It is within ourselves, that peace and truth inhabit. Avoid the great world, there is no security in it; there is always some sentiment which is weakened or awoke; we find but too many people who will

assist the disorder. The more you are in the world, the more the passions acquire authority; it is difficult to resist the attempts of vice when they come so well accompanied. In a word, you will become the more weak, the less modest, and the more unjust, for having lived among mankind. The world communicates its venom to souls of sensibility. We should rather shut all the avenues to the passions; it is easier to prevent their ebullition than to overcome them. We cannot refuse to nature her first movements, but she frequently extends too far; and when you return to yourself you find many subjects for repentance.

33. We should have resources and last resorts: measure your strength and your courage; and, for this purpose, in those things that you fear, set every thing at the worst. Expect with firmness the evil that may befal you; look it in the face, examine it in all its most terrible circumstances, and let it not overcome you.

A favourite, arrived at the height of fortune, showed his riches to his friend. In displaying a chest, he said; "There is my treasure." His friend pressed to see it: he permitted him to open the chest; it contained only an old ragged

habit. The friend appearing surprised, the favourite said; "When fortune shall send me back to my former condition, I am ready."—How happy to have such a resource for the worst, and to feel so much strength for our support!

34. When you ardently wish for any thing, begin by examining the thing desired; observe the good it promises you, and the evils which attend it. Remember that passage in Horace. "Pleasure marches foremost, and conceals her train."

You will cease to fear as soon as you cease to desire. Believe that the wise man does not run after felicity, but bestows it on himself; it must be your own work; it is on your hands. Remember that little is wanting for the necessities of life, but much for those of opinion; that it will be easier to set your desires on a level with your fortune, than your fortune on a level with your desires. If honours and riches could give satisfaction, it would be well to amass them; but the thirst increases with the acquisition: he that most desires is most poor.

35. Young people busy themselves with hope. Rochefoucault says, that, "It is hope which

leads to the end of life by a pleasant road."—The road would be very short if hope did not extend it. Hope is a consoling sentiment, but it may be dangerously used, since it often leads to discontent. The least evil which arises from it is, the suffering what we possess to escape, while we are waiting for what we wish.

36. Our self-love conceals us from ourselves, and lessens to us all our faults: we live among them as among the perfumes that we wear, and are equally insensible to each: they incommode others only: to see them in their true point of view, we must behold them in our neighbours. See your own imperfections with the same eyes with which you see your neighbours. Do not relax from this rule, it will accustom you to equity. Examine your character, and turn all your defects to advantage; there are none which are not connected with, and favourable to some virtues. The object of morality is, not to destroy, but to preserve Nature. Are you proud? Let this sentiment serve to elevate you above the weaknesses of your sex, and to save you from the faults by which it is abased. To every error of the heart, there belongs a pain and a shame, which solicit you

to abandon it. Are you timid?—Turn this weakness to prudence, that you may be prevented from injuring yourself. Are you dissipated?—Are you fond of giving?—It is easy out of prodigality to form generosity. Give with selection and propriety—do not neglect the indigent—take care of the poor—lend to those who want; but give to those who cannot return: by these means you will gratify your sentiment, and do good actions. There is no error, of which, if you will, virtue may not make some use.

37. In the afflictions which befal you, and which you feel that you do not deserve, far from irritating yourself and opposing your own opinion of yourself to the injustice, which you imagine to be done you; remember that the persons from whom it comes, are better able to judge of you than yourself: that you ought rather to believe them than self-love, which is but a flatterer; and that, in what regards yourself, your enemy is nearer truth than you;—that you ought to have no merit in your own eyes, which you have not in those of others. Women have too much inclination to flatter themselves, and are too near to themselves to judge aright.

38. So much for general precepts for opopposing the vices of the mind; but your first attention ought to be paid to the improvement of your heart and sentiments: you can have no sure and durable virtue but from the heart; it is this, properly, which characterises you: to render yourself mistress of it, observe this rule: When you feel yourself agitated by a strong and lively passion, ask some time of your feelings, and compound with your weakness; if, without a moment's hearing, you would sacrifice every thing to your reason and duty, it is to be feared that your passion will revolt, and become the stronger. You are under its government: you must manage it with address; you will find more assistance than you expect from the mode of conduct which I have pointed out:—you will find sure remedies, even in your passions. If it be of hatred, you will learn that you have not so much reason for hatred as you supposed, nor for the vengeance which you desired. If it be the contrary sentiment which occupies you, there is no passion, which furnishes you with more sure assistance against itself.

39. If your heart have the misfortune to be

attacked by love, observe the means by which you may arrest its progress. Reflect that its pleasures are not solid nor faithful; they will leave you, and when they do you no other injury, this is enough. In passion, the soul proposes to itself an object; it is more closely united with it, by desire or by enjoyment, than with its own existence; it attaches to its possession every good, and to its loss every evil.—Meanwhile, this blessing of opinion, this blessing of the soul's choice, is neither solid nor durable; it depends upon others, it depends upon yourself, and you can answer neither for others nor for yourself.

Love, at its beginning, presents you with flowers only, and conceals all its dangers; it deceives you; it always takes some form which is not its own. The heart, in good understanding with love, knows how to conceal his drift, for fear of alarming your reason and modesty. It is a simple amusement, it is a sally of wit, that touches us; in short, till love has made himself master, he seldom presents himself to our eyes. As soon as you perceive him, fly, listen no longer to the complaints of your heart; love does not draw the soul with ordinary efforts; it has too

much intelligence with the heart. As soon as he has surprised you, all is for him, all against you, and nothing can serve you against love.—It is the most cruel situation in which a reasonable person can find herself; wherein nothing supports you, wherein you have no spectator, beside yourself. You must incessantly rally your courage.

40. Reflect upon the dismal end of the passions; you will find but too many examples for your instruction; but, frequently, we are undeceived without being cured. Calculate, if possible, the evils which love can inflict: it overcomes reason—it introduces disquietude in the soul and in the senses—it despoils the flower of innocence—it confounds virtue—it tarnishes reputation—and has shame almost always in its train. Nothing will abase you so much, nothing will put you so greatly beneath yourself, as the passions; they will degrade you; nothing but reason can keep you in your place. It is of much more disastrous consequence to want courage to support a misfortune, than to avoid it.—The pleasure of doing your duty will console you; but never applaud yourself, for fear of being humbled. Remember that you bear your en-

emy with you; pursue such a mode of conduct as will enable you to be responsible for yourself: avoid theatres and impassioned representations; you must not see what you would not feel: music, poetry, all are in the train of voluptuousness. Apply yourself to solid reading, which fortifies the imagination.

Hold no intercourse with your imagination, it will paint love before you in all its charms; all is seduction, illusion, when represented through her medium; it will lose much when you leave that for reality. Saint Augustine has described his condition, when he sought to leave love and pleasure. He says, that what he loved presented itself to him under a charming form. He draws a picture of what passed in his heart, so animated, that it cannot be read without danger. We should pass swiftly over pictures of pleasure, they are to be feared at the time that they pretend to be against her; even if they weep, they are to be mistrusted. —Passion increases by the rebounds which it makes upon itself. Forgetfulness is the only surety which we can take against love. You must reckon seriously with yourself, and say what do I seek to do with the sentiment which I nourish?

Will not such and such misfortunes attend me, if I have the weakness to yield?

Draw upon the very character of your enemy for strength and assistance; when you cease to flatter him, he will furnish you with these supplies. Avoid giving him any assistance, lend him nothing, pardon him nothing, and you will perceive that he has little left. After this, hesitate no longer; take a firm resolution to fly him; assure yourself that you may be as strong as you are desirous to be. Diversions, innocent amusements, are necessary; but all pleasures which speak to the heart, must be avoided.

It is not always our faults which ruin us; it is our manner of behaviour after they are done. An humble acknowledgment of our faults, disarms hatred and softens anger. Women who have had the misfortune to abandon their duty, to wound the decencies of life, and to shock virtue and modesty, owe this respect, to the customs and violated decorums of society—they should preserve an air of humility; this is a sort of reparation which the public demands; it remembers your faults, as soon as you forget them.—Repentance is an assurance of alteration. Anticipate the natural malignity which

is in all mankind; conform yourself to the station in which their pride would place you; when you have thus done their business, they can have nothing to ask of you. Those who are ostentatious after their errors, bring into recollection and immortalize their faults.

41. Let us pass, my daughter, to the duties of society. I have thought that, before all things, it is necessary that you should be drawn from ordinary education, and the prejudices of childhood; that your reason should be fortified, and certain principles given you for your support. I have thought the greater part of the disorders of life, arise from false opinions; that false opinions give improper sentiments; and that, when the mind is not enlightened, the heart is open to passion:—that is, that by the possession of truth in the mind, we are preserved from error:—that we should have right sentiments in the heart, which may give form and propriety to the passions. When you know truth and love justice, all the virtues are in surety.

42. The first duty of civil life is to remember others; those who live for themselves only, fall into contempt and neglect. When you ask

too much of others, they refuse you every thing; friendship, sentiment, and service. Civil life is a commerce of mutual assistances; the most virtuous bring the greatest share: in seeking the good of others you insure your own.

Nothing is more detestable than people who live only for themselves. Self-love, when incensed, commits great crimes; some degrees below this, it enters into vice; but, in its most innocent state, it weakens the virtues and harmonies of society.

It is impossible to connect ourselves with persons, in whom self-love is prevalent and manifest; nevertheless we cannot free ourselves from this disposition. In the same degree that we hold to life, we hold to ourselves.

We believe that we elevate ourselves by abasing our fellows; this it is that renders us slanderous and envious. Goodness does more service than malignity: do good when you can, speak good of every body, never judge with rigour; these acts of goodness and generosity, often repeated, will acquire for you, in the end, a great reputation. Every body becomes interested in praising you, in lessening your faults, in exalting your good qualities. You should

found your reputation on your own virtues, and not on the demerits of others. Remember that their good qualities take nothing from you, and that you can attribute to no one but yourself the failing of your reputation.

43. One thing that renders us very unhappy, is, that we reckon too much upon mankind: this also, is the source of your injustice; we quarrel with it, not for what it owes us, nor for what it has promised, but, for what we have hoped from it. We make a right of our hopes, and its turns to our discontent.

Do not be precipitate in your judgment; never listen to calumnies, even resist first appearances, and never be in haste to condemn. —Remember that there are things resembling truth, that are not true; as there are truths that do not look like truth.

In private judgments, we should imitate the equity of public. Judges never decide without having examined every thing, heard every thing, and confronted the witnesses with the accused. But to us, who without commission, render ourselves arbiters of reputation, any proof suffices, any authority is good, when we have an opportunity for condemnation. Actuated by private

malignity, we believe that we bestow on ourselves what we take from others; and hence arise hatreds and enmities.

Let there be equity, then, in your sentences; the same justice which you give to others, will be rendered to you. Would you be thought and spoken of with respect?—Never then, speak ill of any one.

44. Civility, which is an imitation of charity, is also, one of the virtues of society; it places you above others when you possess it in a more eminent degree; but it cannot be practised nor supported, but at the expense of self-love.—Civility always takes from yourself, and benefits others; it is one of the great bonds of society, and the sole quality which gives security and pleasure to intercourse.

We naturally love to govern:—this is an unjust sentiment. Whence have we our rights for elevating ourselves above others? There is but one legitimate and allowed domination; it is that of virtue. Possess more goodness and generosity than others, be in advance with services and benefits; these are the means of elevation.—Great disinterestedness will render you as independent, and more elevated, than fortune itself.

Nothing debases us so much as the love of wealth.

These are the virtues which enter into society, the mind has nothing to do with others; and you frequently see very detestable people with a great portion of wit: they would give you a great opinion of themselves; they would rule and subjugate others.

Though humility is regarded only as a christian virtue, it must, nevertheless, be allowed as a virtue of society; and one so necessary that, without it, intercourse would be difficult. It is the high opinion which we entertain of ourselves, which leads us to assert our rights with so much haughtiness, and assume so much over those of others.

We should never reckon rigourously with any one. Exact honesty does not authorize you to ask for all that is your due. Do not fear to be in advance with your friends. If you would be an amiable friend, require nothing with too much rigour; but, to the end that your manners may not be inconsistent, as they express the inward disposition, reflect frequently, and with seriousness, upon your failings and show them to yourself free from all disguise: you will

draw from this examination, sentiments of humility toward yourself, and of indulgence toward others.

Be humble without being abashed: bashfulness is a secret pride.

45. Reputation is a very desirable blessing; but it is weakness to seek it with too much ardour; we should be content to merit it. We must not reject the sentiment of glory; it is the most certain aid upon which we can rest for virtue; but you should be careful to choose a glory which is worthy of you.

46. Accustom yourself to see, without astonishment and without envy, those who are above you, and without contempt, those who are beneath. Let not pomp impose upon you, it is only little minds which are prostrate before grandeur.

To accustom yourself to esteem men only for their own qualities, consider the condition of a person upon whom honours, dignities, and riches are heaped, to whom nothing seems to be wanting; but to whom, in reality, every thing is wanting. "Nothing is worse," says one of the ancients, "than poverty in riches; because the evil belongs to the mind" He who is in this situation, suffers all the evils of opinion, without

enjoying the gifts of fortune: he is blinded by error, and torn by passions: meanwhile, a person of understanding, who is unpossessed of any thing, but who, in the place of false blessings, has substituted sage and solid reflections, enjoys unequalled tranquillity. The happiness of the one, and the misery of the other, result only from the different manner of thinking.

47. If you are exposed to the feelings of hatred and vengeance, oppose them; nothing is so mean as to revenge. If any one has injured you, you owe him nothing but contempt; and this debt is easily paid. If a person has been wanting to you only in trifling matters, you owe such a one indulgence:—but there are seasons of injustice to be gone through in life; times, when friends, for whom you have done much, join to blame you; but when you see all active to revile you, it is not by obstinacy you should oppose them. We should run after the esteem of our friends; but when you discover that people who will not see you but in a false point of view; when you have explained yourself to those ardent and fiery imaginations, whose wit is only employed to support their injustice; after this, whatever you do, you will obtain only

opprobium. You must now oppose to their injustice and to the hauteur of their disdain, the rampart of your innocence, and the consciousness of your rectitude. Be careful that, if when they praised you, you did not on that account value them the more; now, when they decry you, you do not value them the less: you should, without being servile, rather pity them; avoid irritating their temper if possible, and only say, "They have bad eyes." Reflect that with good qualities, hatred and envy may be overcome; and that the hopes which may be drawn from virtue, will sustain and console you.

Try to be revenged only by mingling a greater portion of moderation in your conduct, than those who attack you have of malice. It is only elevated souls which can feel the glory of pardoning.

Endeavour to have good reason for esteeming yourself, that you may have somewhat in place of the esteem which is refused you. You have but one mode of revenge—that of doing good to those who have injured you. This is the most delicate and only allowable vengeance: you gratify your feelings without taking from your virtues. Cæsar has given us an example.

His lieutenant Labienus, deserted him at a time when he most wanted his assistance, and went over to Pompey's Camp: he left behind him, in that of Cæsar, a considerable sum of money. Cæsar sent it after him, and said, "See how Cæsar is revenged."

It is prudent to profit by the faults of others, even when they injure ourselves; but, frequently, they begin the mistake, and we complete it. We use improperly the rights which we have acquired over them, we seek to take too much advantage of their faults; this injustice and violence turns bye-standers against ourselves. If we suffer with moderation, every one is for us; and the faults of those by whom we are attacked, are doubled by our patience.

When you know that your friends are unsound and dissimulating, as soon as you let them see that you perceive this, their malignity increases, and you set their hatred at liberty. In concealing your knowledge, you flatter their self-love; they enjoy the pleasure of imposing upon you, they believe themselves your superiors; as long as they are discovered, they triumph in your error, and enjoy the pleasure of holding you fast. In not letting them see that you know

them, you give them time to repent, and to return to themselves. Nothing is wanting but some service, timely rendered, or another light in which things may be seen, to render them really attached to you.

48. Be faithful to your promise; but that your word may obtain entire confidence, be extremely delicate and careful in what you say. Respect truth even in trifling things; think that nothing is so contemptible as to wound it. It has been said, that a lie evinces contempt for God, and fear of man; and that he who speaks truth, resembles God, who speaks truth and does good. Oaths, also, must be avoided: the plain word of a virtuous person, ought to have all the authority of an oath.

49. Politeness is the desire of pleasing. Nature gives, and education and the world increases, it. Politeness is a supplement of virtue; it is said that she came into the world when that daughter of heaven abandoned it. In the rudest times, when virtue was no more, politeness at least, was known: she came with voluptuousness—she is the daughter of luxury and delicacy. It has been doubted, whether she belongs most to vice or virtue: without pre-

suming to decide or define upon this subject, may I be permitted to express my own sentiments? I think that it is one of the principal bonds of society, because it contributes so essentially to peace. It prepares the mind for charity, it is even an imitation of humility. True politeness is modest, and it seeks to please—it knows that the means of success are not to make others feel that we do not prefer ourselves; that to give them the first place in our esteem.

Pride separates us from society—our self-love gives us a rank which is always disputed—the esteem of ourselves almost always exposes us to universal contempt. Politeness is the art of conciliating with pleasure, that which we owe to others, and that which we owe to ourselves; for these duties have their boundaries, which passed, one becomes flattery to others, the other pride to yourself—this is the most seducing quality.

The most polite persons have commonly a gentleness in their manners, and social qualities; this is the girdle of Venus: it embellishes and confers graces upon all who wear it: possessed of this, you cannot fail to please.

There are many degrees of politeness: you

will have one, fine in proportion to the delicacy of your mind; it will enter into all your manners, your conversation; nay, even your silence.

Exact politeness forbids us to speak with pride of our minds or talents; it has also, the fortitude to appear happy in the sight of certain misfortunes. The world only is capable of polishing the manners, but it requires much delicacy to admit politeness into the mind itself. With a fine and delicate politeness, many faults will be forgiven you, and your good qualities will be admitted. Those who want manners, have special need of more solid recommendations, and their reputation will grow but slowly; in a word, politeness costs little, and gives much.

Silence always becomes a young person: there is a modesty and dignity to be kept up; you judge others, and you hazard nothing yourself; but take care not to have a sullen and insulting silence; it should be the effect of your reserve, but not of your pride. But as one cannot always know what to do, it should be known that the first rule for speaking well is, thinking well.

When your ideas are formed, and assorted, your discourse will be clear, though it should

be full of modesty and reserve. Respect prejudices and customs in your conversation. Expressions indicate the sentiments, and the sentiments express the manners.

50. It is necessary above all, to avoid the character of a jester; this is always a bad person, and rarely, in making a laugh, does he make himself esteemed.

Pay attention to others rather than to yourself. Listen respectfully, and avoid discovering, either in your eyes or in your manner, an inattentive air.

Deal but little in story telling; narrate in a neat and brief manner: what you tell should be new, or the turn you give it should be new. The world is full of people who bring sounds to the ears, without saying any thing to the mind. When we speak, we ought to please or instruct: when you demand attention, you ought to return it by what is worthy. A speech that has nothing beyond mediocrity, cannot be too short.

Approve, but rarely admire: admiration is the share of fools. Banish art and affectation from your discourse; the chief prudence consists in speaking little, and in putting less confidence in yourself than in others. A straight

forward conduct, a reputation of probity, draws more confidence and esteem, and in the end, more advantages of fortune, than shuffling and bye-ways. Nothing will render you worthy of great things and raise you above others, like scrupulous probity.

51. Accustom yourself to goodness and humanity toward your domestics An ancient says, "they ought to be regarded as unfortunate friends." Take care never to show the extreme difference which subsists between you, do not make them feel their condition: do not bear too hard upon them: nothing is so mean as to behave with loftiness to those who are subjected to you.

Do not use illiberal words; these are what a polite and delicate person should be ignorant of. Servitude being established in opposition to the natural equality of men, it ought to be softened as much as possible. Have we a right to expect domestics without faults, we, who shew our own every day? We must bear with some. When you are seen full of caprice and anger, (for people frequently unmask themselves before their servants) what a spectacle do you present to their eyes! Can you forbid them,

then, the right of reprisal? You ought not to live in a low familiarity with them, but you owe them assistance, advice, and benefits, proportionate to your condition, and their necessity.

It is right to preserve an authority over a domestic, but it should be a gentle authority.—Neither should we always threaten without executing, for fear of exposing our threats to contempt; but authority should not be called in before persuasion fails. Recollect that humanity and christianity equalizes all. The impatience and ardor of youth, joined with the false idea, which you entertain of yourselves, makes you regard domestics, as people of a nature different from your own: how contrary are these sentiments to the modesty, which you owe to yourself, and the humanity which we owe to others!

Indulge no taste for the flattery of domestics; and, in order to counteract the impression which flattering speeches, often repeated, may make upon you, remember that these people are paid for the purpose of administering to your weakness and your pride.

If through misfortune, my child, you do not follow my counsels, if they are lost upon you, they will be useful to myself. By giving these

precepts, I have laid myself under new obligations. These reflections are new engagements to endeavour to be virtuous. I fortify my reason, even against myself; and I have exposed myself to the necessity of obeying them, or of bearing the shame of having at once known and forsaken them.

Nothing is more humiliating, my child, than to write on topics, which bring all my own faults to my remembrance. In discovering to you mine, I have robbed myself of the right of reproving yours. I give you arms against myself, and I permit you to use them, if you see that I have vices opposite to the virtues which I recommend to you; for precepts are destitute of authority when they are unsupported by example.

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